2025 Pre-Convention Journal

The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

October 2025

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Annual Report of Official Acts

The Right Reverend Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown, Eleventh Bishop of Vermont

This report covers the time period from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, 16 visits (total) were made to congregations in Vermont.

08/04/2024	St. Mark's, Springfield
08/18/2024	St. Luke's, St. Albans
08/25/2024	St. James, Woodstock
09/15/2025	Trinity Church, Rutland
09/22/2024	St. Barnabas's, Norwich
09/29/2024	St. Mary's in the Mountains, Wilmington
10/13/2024	St. Peter's, Bennington
10/20/2024	St. James, Essex Junction
10/27/2024	Immanuel, Bellows Falls
12/01/2024	St. John's in the Mountains, Stowe
12/08/2024	St. Peter's, Bennington
12/15/2024	Christ Church, Island Pond
01/12/2025	St. Martin's, Fairlee
01/19/2025	St. Mark's, Newport
02/09/2025	St. Stephen's, Middlebury
02/16/2025	St. Paul's, Vergennes

During these visits, 18 people were confirmed, 7 people were received, 2 people were baptized, and 2 people were reaffirmed.

During this 12-month period, Bishop MacVean-Brown consented to 3 Episcopal elections, 1 request for permission to officiate, 1 request for a blessing of a civil union for marriage after divorce, and 1 request for permission for marriage after divorce.

On August 1, 2024 the Rev. Anne E. Hartley was received from the Diocese of Southwest Florida.

On August 15, 2024 the Rev. Justin Lanier was released to the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

On September 1, 2024 the Rev. Kathleen Schotto was received from the Diocese of Maryland.

On January 31, 2025 the Rev. Deacon Elizabeth Skaleski was received from the Diocese of Connecticut.

On February 3, 2025 the Rev. Deacon Charles C. Nichols, Jr. was received from the Diocese of New Hampshire.

On April 1, 2025 Bishop MacVean-Brown departed on sabbatical.

The following canonically resident clergy died during this time:

The Rev. John P. Keenan died on July 19, 2024.

The Rev. Jacquelyn F. Arbuckle died on December 29, 2024.

The Rev. Stewart Pierson died on January 31, 2025.

The Rev. Gunnar Urang died on February 19, 2025.

The Rev. Janet K. Brown died on April 5, 2025.

The Rev. Reed H. Brown died on April 7, 2025.

The Ven. J. Stannard Baker died on June 24, 2025.

The following official activities occurred from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025:

On Sundays and Wednesdays until she departed for her sabbatical, Bishop MacVean-Brown acted as the officiant for the Green Mountain Online Abbey.

From October 2 to 4, Bishop MacVean-Brown attended the Thriving Congregations Conference with the Lilly Foundation in Indianapolis.

On October 19, Bishop MacVean-Brown attended the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Julia Whitworth, 17th Bishop of Massachusetts.

On October 21, Bishop MacVean-Brown participated in a focus group led by Compass, Insight Global's Culture & Leadership Development Division for Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe.

On February 11, Bishop MacVean-Brown preached at Voorhees University's Annual Absalom Jones service.

During the time period of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, Bishop MacVean-Brown made her annual visits to the Cathedral of St. Paul for Christmas Eve.

During the time period of July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, Bishop MacVean-Brown participated in and served on the following Episcopal Church bodies:

- She attended two annual meetings of the House of Bishops.
- Annual Province 1 Bishops Retreat
- Province 1 conference meetings.
- Union of Black Episcopalians, Honorary Board Chair, attending monthly and annual meetings

Respectfully submitted,

The Right Reverend Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown
Eleventh Bishop of Vermont

Treasurer's Report

No report submitted.

Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center

Overview

Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center was established in 1952 in historic Chelsea, Vermont on over 120 acres of beautiful land and woods. At Brookhaven, we are committed to providing quality clinical and educational programming for youth ages 6 - 14 with emotional/behavioral disturbances and learning difficulties. Trauma-informed services offered at Brookhaven include therapeutic residential care, individual, group, and family therapy, case management services, psychopharmacological support, and specialized education.

Brookhaven's campus is made up of a main building, Learning Center, family retreat, sports pavilion, and a number of outdoor areas that include playgrounds as well as options for hiking and swimming. The main building houses both administrative and clinical offices, kitchen and cafeteria, a dormitory that accommodates up to 8 youth, staff quarters, and a day room for TV watching, staff training, and other group activity. The Learning Center contains multiple rooms for classes, sensory activities, and individual quiet time, and serves the educational needs of both residents and day students. The Family Retreat provides an opportunity for parents of residents to have overnight and extended visits with their child in a home-like environment as well as to receive education and guided practice in building parenting skills. Brookhaven is committed to providing the services and support needed to help children and families achieve success both during and after treatment.

Residential Program

As a Vermont licensed residential treatment center, Brookhaven specializes in providing therapeutic residential based services for eligible youth ages 6 - 14. This level of care is intensive and is often the result of chronic difficulty that has created impairment for the child and prevented success within the home, at school, and in the community. Most children who enter Brookhaven present with significant mental health issues and behavioral concerns for which placement into congregate care and clinical services becomes essential.

At Brookhaven, residents are provided with a comprehensive, collaborative, and clinically informed opportunity to heal and correct patterns that have hampered their progress elsewhere. Over an average one-year stay, they receive constant supervision, structure, and support within a dormitory milieu. Direct Care staff are the front-line team members who assist Brookhaven youth with therapeutic programming, individual goals, and daily activities from wake-up to tuck-in. Brookhaven counselors conduct therapy with youth and their families, facilitate group therapy sessions, and closely monitor each child's progress through the program. In addition to regular counseling, Brookhaven youth meet with a child psychiatrist monthly for ongoing evaluation and pharmacotherapy if needed. The full-time case manager helps maintain continuity between all services, including providing psychoeducational groups, coordinating visits between youth and families, transporting residents to outside appointments, and overseeing the proper packaging and administering of any medications. Finally, Brookhaven administrators and leadership provide program oversight, ensuring compliance with all standards of care, quality of services,

staff supervision, and ensuring that needs are being met of the children, families, and community partners being served.

Educational Program

The Brookhaven Learning Center is a Vermont Approved Independent Therapeutic School providing both general and special education services to attending students. In addition to the youth residing at Brookhaven, students from surrounding school districts are also accepted to attend Brookhaven's co-educational classes when identified as needing an alternative education placement. Brookhaven's team of classroom teachers, aides, and behavioral support staff are highly skilled at designing and delivering curriculum to meet the special needs of students who are typically unsuccessful in more conventional settings. Under the guidance of the Special Education Coordinator, teaching staff utilize therapeutic, creative, and highly experiential approaches to individualize instruction and motivate learning. As students progress through the program, plans are coordinated to help them transition back to regular ed classrooms, receive appropriate supports, and achieve long term school success.

The Year in Review

Brookhaven has maintained its strong mission over this reporting period despite such challenges as under-funding and under-staffing that have become common for organizations like ours in Vermont. Together, our team has worked hard not only to adapt but also innovate and expand services in order to provide specialized mental health care and education for youth both within and beyond our immediate community.

After two years of pursuing relief from FEMA for the losses Brookhaven experienced in the flood of 2023, we are happy to announce receipt of funds to rebuild our much-missed gymnasium. This has certainly been an arduous and obstacle-laden process, so it was good to see this long-awaited outcome. With contractors now paid for and in place, our plans will be to finally begin construction late this summer (August '25) and hopefully reach completion by the end of the year. We certainly extend our gratitude to all of those who lobbied and lent their support along the way to bring about the return of this important resource to our program.

Once again, staff shortages and a lack of steady applicants continue to impact residential programs throughout Vermont. All facilities have struggled to keep shifts fully covered and effectively process new referrals, admissions, and enrollment. Brookhaven continues to be very active and intentional in our recruitment and retention efforts to help mediate these conditions. Likewise, we remain ever-grateful for more than a few core members of our team who have been with us many years and continue to go above-and-beyond to help fill these gaps and maintain quality of care.

Alongside staffing shortages, well-known problems persist in Vermont with connecting youth in need of residential services to programs like Brookhaven, resulting in critical lapses in utilization. The number of systemic hurdles placed in front of children who could benefit from residential treatment often delay services to the extent that symptoms worsen and require a greater level of care beyond what programs like Brookhaven can provide. Consequently, many

children whose problems have severely escalated must be placed in larger and more protective programs out of state. Brookhaven's leadership has been very vocal about these issues and recently succeeded in gathering the support of our local State Representative, Joshua Dobrovich. Rep. Dobrovich visited Brookhaven to gain a better understanding of the need and took the step of drafting several bills geared toward addressing these and other problems with mental health care. We are hopeful that these proposals will be taken up in the next legislative session and lead to improvements.

Among the changes highlighted in last year's report was Brookhaven's approval to accept females into our residential program. This change in designated population we are licensed to serve was long contemplated and overdue. It also aligned with the co-educational status in our Learning Center/Therapeutic School. Since that approval, we have been able to welcome several females into our residential program enabling us to now serve all genders, respond to the growing needs of our community, and outreach to a greater number of families and youth.

In other program news, Brookhaven was also excited to be able to recently extend our residential services to out-of-state youth for the first time. During the past months, we successfully negotiated a contract with the state of Maine and became enrolled as one of their Medicaid providers. Beginning this summer, we began to process referrals and admissions of youth from Maine's system of care. Beyond that, we have also completed preliminary meetings with DHHS in New Hampshire and are hopeful that we can be a resource for them as well. While referrals of Vermont children are still prioritized, this expanded outreach should help keep our program vital and our census full.

As always, our most important resource at Brookhaven continues to be the people who make the program work with their unwavering dedication to helping our kids. We are fortunate indeed to be able to highlight some of those staff who have remained at Brookhaven and have been mentioned across multiple annual reports.

In our Learning Center, Brittany Tremblay has stepped in once again to serve as our interim Special Education Coordinator to oversee our academic program until such time we instate a more permanent administrator in this position. We are happy to report that Forrest Teullane continues as Brookhaven's lead classroom teacher. Forrest remains a popular presence in the classroom, and exceptional at forming meaningful relationships with students and making learning fun. Additionally, we are just as pleased that he has decided to pursue his Special Educator license which will expand his role at Brookhaven and further his commitment to our students. Rounding out the school team is long-timer Scott Hoyt. As Student Support Specialist, Scott is highly skilled at responding to rapidly emerging student needs throughout the school day. Scott also continues chaperoning eligible students to our local public school several days a week to offer them a greater range of activities and experiences.

In the cafeteria, Madelyn Hood continues keeping kids and crew well-nourished as our Kitchen Manager. Maddie has been especially creative at catering wonderful meals for our special occasions. From individual birthday requests by our kids to our annual Christmas gathering with the Board of Directors, we have all enjoyed her culinary talents. Also, given the amount of kids

Brookhaven is receiving recently on very specialized diets, her willingness to accommodate these complex needs is especially appreciated.

In our clinical program, Abby Jarvis continues as our highly experienced, attentive, and effective lead clinician at Brookhaven. In this role she not only provides treatment to youth on her caseload and their families but also processes residential referrals and admissions. Additionally, she continues to work closely with the Executive Director in implementing policies, monitoring treatment, and ensuring quality of services. At the same time, Abby devotes at least one day a week to providing Brookhaven's school-based and outpatient counseling services to students in our local public school. Elsewhere on the clinical team, Kent Kilpatrick remains as busy as ever as Brookhaven's Case Manager. He covers much ground in his daily duties including running psychoeducational groups, transporting youth to activities, communicating with stakeholders, and supervising visits between residents and significant others both remotely and on campus. Kent also oversees the important task of making sure prescriptions for Brookhaven youth are correctly filled, shipped, and distributed. We are especially appreciative of Kent's flexibility with adjusting his work schedule to meet the rapidly changing coverage needs of the program.

Administratively, Brenda Salomaa will soon be celebrating a remarkable 24 years of reliable service as Administrative Assistant at Brookhaven. From her front office position, she not only greets callers and offers visitors a warm reception but also remains an invaluable and always-accessible resource to staff and leadership on all things Brookhaven. Residential Coordinator Jessica Allen continues her now 13-year record of effectively providing for the around-the-clock care of youth residing at Brookhaven. In this role, she trains and schedules Youth Care Worker staff, supervises the food and maintenance programs, and plans the daily activities of the residents. With the ongoing challenges of under-staffing and a sparse pool of applicants in the workforce, Jessica is recognized for both the endless energy and abundant hours she devotes to the program.

Rounding out the above team members and leaders are the many other support staff who maintain their strong commitment and hard work every day to help Brookhaven youth succeed. Recently hired Head of Maintenance Tom Lund is learning the massive job of keeping everything on Brookhaven's campus looking good and working well. Finally, the Youth Care Worker team are the front line faithful who nurture and guide our youth daily through the program. This tireless crew covers all shifts including weekends and holidays and counts among them staff with multiple years of service. Some notables are Jason Waterman (23 years and counting), Maria Genega (17 years), and Robin Skiffington (6 years). Again, we are fortunate to have this core group of workers and such continuity in this demanding position. Their strong commitment to meeting an urgent need and making a difference does not go unnoticed.

Unfortunately, as with any organization, there is always some turnover and staff that move on in their careers. Samantha Greer stepped down as Special Education Coordinator to cut back on work obligations and complete a Ph.D. We thank her for her capable work at our school and certainly wish her well in her future endeavors. And, sadly, in a very notable departure, Brookhaven said goodbye to a long-time member of our leadership team, Angela Bisson. Angie wore many different hats during her outstanding 18 years of service at Brookhaven, including a long tenure as our Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Coordinator. In this role, she trained,

supervised, and supported scores of Brookhaven staff in trauma-informed methods of de-escalating and managing kids in crisis. Angie has young children and has increasingly wanted to develop a work life that mirrors their schedule. Accordingly, she accepted a position as a behavioral specialist in her children's school and will be able to work during their school day while enjoying summers off with them. We congratulate Angie on her new opportunity and celebrate her many years of dedicated service at Brookhaven. She will be missed by everyone!

A Message on Behalf of the Executive Director

Rocky Spino will soon be marking 6 eventful and enjoyable years as Executive Director at Brookhaven. Despite the challenges of flood recovery and fluctuating resources, he is proud that Brookhaven's mission not only endures but evolves with an ever-amazing team who constantly show up to serve children and families. We collectively continue to be very blessed with the opportunity to engage in meaningful work and embody Brookhaven's tradition of help and healing.

Footnotes and a Final Word

One again, none of the essential work that Brookhaven accomplishes could exist without the outstanding service and support of our valued Board of Trustees. At this writing, their present roster includes: Brett Murphy, Lucas Krueger, Teresa Voorhees, Judith Castonguay, Martha Roberts, Sally Garmon, Rev. Paul Habersang, Linda Runnion, and Rev. Beth Ann Maier. Many thanks go out to these Board officers and members for their strong and steady backing of Brookhaven through good times and bad.

In closing, it is our pleasure to present this summary of another year's worth of activity at Brookhaven and to profile some of our work with the attendees of the Diocesan Convention. On behalf of the children and staff, we offer our heartfelt gratitude to the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont for their ongoing generosity and support.

Respectfully submitted,

Rocky Spino, Brookhaven Leadership, and Staff
Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center

Cathedral Church of St. Paul

To the People of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont:

We look forward to welcoming all of you to the Cathedral for our in-person Convention gathering on October 25th! For those who cannot attend on that day in person, we will be streaming from the Nave to the Diocesan YouTube channel for the duration of our gathering.

In my last report, I informed you of a building issue concerning water in our elevator shaft. After some careful exploration, we discovered some large areas on the roof that needed to be sealed. This was done and seems to have fixed the problem! Hurrah!

Peter Berton has been with us as Director of Music & Cathedral Arts for the duration of this reporting year, and I am happy to say that our music program is thriving. We have several new young choristers, several new adult choir members, and a thriving Cathedral Arts program. Peter hit the ground running and has not stopped since. One of the more fun things he and the Cathedral Arts team did was design a Champlainopoly© game. That game features restaurants, stores, schools, and more from in and around Burlington and is great fun to play. Games will be available for purchase on October 25 during our time together. It makes for a great Christmas present for your favorite game lovers. The game is only one of the many ways Peter and Cathedral Arts are raising funds to continue to finance the work of bringing beautiful music to the Cathedral, a venue much loved by musicians.

Our congregation is vibrant and growing with many young adults and families finding their way into our common life. We continue with one service on Sunday mornings and a multi-generational choir, and our worship life is joyful and life-giving. Young families are attracted to the ways in which we welcome children as full participants in our worship service, and it gives us great joy to do so. We are reintroducing choral evensong this fall as a regular offering, as well as the much beloved Taizé style services.

We continue to host Diocesan events and provide emergency evacuation space for Three Cathedral Square and Burlington High School. We host a mental health support group every Thursday and rent our kitchen full-time to a baker. This past spring we had significant issues with folks camping on Cathedral property and had to involve the police to help us move them on. We continue to try to work with our unhoused neighbors to ensure they are receiving services,

have food to eat, and the like, but can no longer allow them to camp on our property for safety reasons. We are, happily, able to help folks leave Vermont if that is what they are seeking, sending them by bus or train to their desired destination.

We began a program of having two or three parishioners serve as liaisons to area service agencies that we support financially as we are able. Those agencies are Feeding Chittendon County, Spectrum Adult and Youth Services, Migrant Justice, JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project), Elmwood Pods (housing), and COTS (homeless).

I rotated off the Commission on Finance, the Diocesan Executive Council, and the Joint Disciplinary Board for the Diocese of VT, NH, and ME. I continue as a clergy delegate to General Convention and hope to get re-elected to that position at our convention. I had the good blessing to be able to take a sabbatical this summer, and I am so grateful for that time away.

The loss of The Venerable J. Stannard Baker rocked us to our core. We miss him terribly. Thank you to all of you who have reached out to us and to Peter, Stan's husband, during this difficult time. Stan lives on in the work we do here, especially in the bright lives of our Cathedral children.

As Dean I strive to make myself available to all of you and continue to try to reach out and drive out to see each church and active clergyperson; a delightful task that I wish I had more time for (Brattleboro- I'm coming soon!).

Your Cathedral is thriving, and we are deeply thankful for your prayers.

Respectfully submitted,

The Very Revd Greta Getlein (she/her)
Dean & Rector

Canons Committee

No report submitted.

Committee on Ministry

September 2025
Prepared by Dr. Lisa Schnell, Chair

Major emphases of the Committee on Ministry (COM) over the past year have included discernment with individuals in the ordination process, the first stage in a full revision of the Parish Discernment Handbook, the continued streamlining of procedures with diocesan staff, and substantive conversations among ourselves about ways we might, as a *Commission* on Ministry, begin to lay foundations for formation activities related to lay ministry.

Discernment conversations with individuals who feel called to ordained ministry are the heart of the Committee's work. Those conversations take place at the request of the bishop, so our work proceeds in partnership with the bishop's discernment. This spring we recommended both Heather Caulfield-Mills (Trinity, Shelburne), and Henry Kellogg (Cathedral Church of St. Paul) for postulancy for priesthood. The bishop, who alone has the authority to move people forward toward ordination, affirmed both recommendations. Heather, who began her seminary training before postulancy, is now in her final year at Berkeley Divinity School at Yale; Henry began his seminary training this fall at Virginia Theological Seminary. We feel blessed to be part of Heather's and Henry's journeys towards ordination.

We are aware of four other people who are approaching postulancy – two who have completed their respective Parish Discernment process, and two who are presently in the midst of that process. Three of those folks are answering a call to the priesthood; the fourth is discerning a call to the diaconate. We look forward to beginning our relationships with them all in the year ahead.

Making the path to Holy Orders clearer has been an important part of the COM's work for several years now. It began, first, with a full revision of the *Handbook for Those Discerning a Call to Ordination as a Deacon* (completed in September 2022), and a similarly thorough revision of the *Handbook for Those Discerning a Call to Ordination as a Priest* (completed in Spring 2024). The last handbook in need of revision is the *Parish Discernment Handbook*. We have made significant progress on that revision and expect to complete it early in 2026.

We are grateful to have experienced a significant increase in discerners over the last year, but the question for us remains: how can we continue to encourage people to explore the possibility of a call to the priesthood or the vocational diaconate? A similar question will be added to our own discernment in the year ahead: how can we, as the COM, encourage people to explore their call to lay ministry? With the THRIVE process now taking us back to our original status in the diocese as the *Commission* on Ministry, we look ahead to ways we can effectively contribute to the building of structures that support the development of *lay* leadership, even as we continue to strengthen the supports for folks discerning calls to Holy Orders.

The COM has a strong, committed membership. We are grateful for the continuing work of the Rev. Amy Spagna of St. James, Woodstock, who also serves as Vice Chair of the COM; the Rev. Jeremy Means-Koss, who serves as our Clerk; the Rev. Scott Neal, of the Upper Valley Constellation; Dr. Jay Parini of St. Stephen's, Middlebury; Dr. Carolyn Taylor-Olson of St. Michael's, Brattleboro; the Rev. Fran Stanford of Holy Trinity, Swanton; and Dr. Noma Anderson of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul. We are blessed to have, as new members of the COM, Rev. Deacon Lars Hunter of St. Michael's, Brattleboro and Diane Holland of Christ Church, Montpelier. We are also grateful for the steady ex officio presence of the Rev. Fred Moser, President of the Standing Committee, and the Rev. Canon Susan Ohlidal, Canon to the Ordinary for Missional Vitality.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Lisa Schnell

Chair

Commission on Finance

The Commission on Finance was established following the 2022 Diocesan Convention. The functions of the Financial Oversight & Audit Committee as well as the Grants & Loans Committee became a part of this Commission. Generally, we meet monthly to review grant and loan applications; parish assessments, audits, and parochial reports; and review diocesan financial statements presented by the Interim CFO (in the absence of a Treasurer). We also provide guidance to parishes in the completion and submission of their audits and parochial reports.

During 2025, the Commission awarded $84,000 in grants and $0 in loans. We continue to build on collected data to assist in streamlining historical financial information. We also continue to refine and hopefully simplify the reporting process for our parishes. Several Commission members were also part of a task force to discuss distressed congregations and outline steps forward.

In May 2025, we experienced a transition in leadership. The Very Rev. Greta Getlein stepped down as Chair and resigned from the Commission to give more time and attention to other ministries. Greta steered the Commission through its beginning, and we are grateful for her time and wisdom.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Melanie J Combs, Chair

Ecumenical and Religious Officer

As Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer, I represent The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont in the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) and at the Annual Meeting of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers (EDEIO). For the past five years I have served as Province 1 Coordinator of Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers and on the Executive Board of EDEIO. I also serve on the Vermont Ecumenical Council (VEC) and as an overseer of the Vermont Bible Society.

In May 2025 I met as a member of the Executive Board of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers (EDEIO). The EDEIO Board helps sustain the ecumenical work of The Episcopal Church and contributes to annual planning for the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU). The NWCU gathers ecumenical representatives from Roman Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, and Evangelical Christian bodies each year around issues of social justice and theological dialogue; the NWCU seeks to foster deeper working relationships among Christian bodies as well as articulate grounds for common understandings. While the NWCU was originally established out of "Faith and Order" concerns, contemporary Workshops are more focused on matters of "Life and Works." The 2025 NCWU was recently held in September in Chicago at the ELCA's Lutheran Center. This year's Workshop featured addresses by The Rt. Rev. Ann Ritonia, Episcopal Bishop Suffragan for Armed Forces and Federal Ministries, and The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA Presiding Bishop, on praying ecumenically for peace in a time of conflict. Seminars focused on continuing ecumenical development of the Season of Creation across denominations, ecumenical responses to current concerns for migrant, immigrant, and refugee people and ecumenical concerns for Christians in places of contemporary persecution. Among Episcopal diocesan representatives, work continued on development of formal provisions for Local Ecumenical Partnerships, the subject of Resolution A042, which was before our most recent General Convention. In addition to Episcopal Church ecumenical and interreligious officers, the NWCU includes Roman Catholic, Lutheran (ELCA), United Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Moravian, Greek Orthodox, and Evangelical/Pentecostal representatives, members of several ecumenical advocacy agencies, and interfaith observers.

The Vermont Ecumenical Council's observance of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2025 took place on the Day of Pentecost this past June, as an expression of the record in Acts that on that day the followers of Jesus were "all together in one place." Although the traditional dates for observing the Week are January 18-25, between the Feasts of the Confession of St. Peter and the Conversion of St. Paul, as coordinated by the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute (the Week's official sponsor), our experience in Vermont has been that spring-time observances bring greater participation. Our VEC service was hybrid and held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Shelburne, with an ecumenical supper following. All members of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont are considered members of the VEC by virtue of our Diocesan

membership and are welcome to participate in the VEC. The VEC's website (www.vecncc.org) is maintained with postings of articles and events of ecumenical interest across Vermont's Christian traditions. As a "Network for Christian Cooperation" (its organizing principle), the VEC seeks ways for Christians and Christian churches of different backgrounds to come together around matters of common interest and concern. In the spirit of the World Council of Church's "Lund Principle," which affirms that "churches should act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately," the VEC seeks ways for Christians in Vermont to cooperate. Membership is open to all Vermont Christians and Christian judicatories and organizations.

An important partner organization within the VEC is the Vermont Bible Society. The Bible Society is generously endowed through regular disbursements from the Greenleaf Fund and provides Bibles upon request at no charge to churches and Christian ministries throughout Vermont. Episcopal parishes are encouraged to take advantage of this resource when considering their needs for Bibles for worship spaces, study groups, classes, and other ministries. Information about procuring Bibles can be found on the VEC's website, https://vecncc.org.

I am grateful for our Diocese's ongoing support of ecumenical and interreligious ministry, particularly our faithful payment of modest annual EDEIO dues ($350) as requested by the Presiding Bishop, support of the VEC, and the opportunity to represent our Diocese annually at the NWCU and meetings of EDEIO. I am most grateful for the many untold ecumenical and interreligious ministries that happen throughout our Diocese through local parishes. By building these relationships the most fruitful ecumenical and interreligious work is done. I am happy to offer teaching, resources, and other support and information as desired to any congregation seeking deeper ecumenical and interreligious relationships. Please be in touch.

Respectfully submitted September 18, 2025

Fred Moser

The Rev. Dr. Frederick P. Moser
Priest-in-Charge, Trinity Episcopal Church, Shelburne
Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer
President of the Standing Committee
Episcopal Diocese of Vermont
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Executive Council

Diocesan Convention 2023 established the Executive Council (Canon 6). Convened for the first time in January 2024, the Executive Council comprises lay and clergy leaders from diocesan governing bodies and commissions. The Council undertakes activities on behalf of God's mission in the diocese and is charged with oversight of the diocesan budget to support the ministry of the diocese. Canon 6 also reads in part: "… the Council shall exercise the executive powers of the Diocese between sessions of the annual Convention and shall be responsible for the promotion of the Mission of God in the Church and the programs of the Diocese. To that end, the Executive Council may take such actions, organize, supervise, and coordinate such departments, commissions, task forces, and committees as it may deem necessary."

Members:

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown, Bishop and President of Executive Council
The Rev. Melanie Combs, Commission on Finance Chairperson (starting June 2025)
Sarah Cowan, President of the Board of Trustees
Becca Boucher, Commission on Finance (member though June; alternate starting July)
The Very Rev. Greta Getlein, Recording Secretary and Commission on Finance Chairperson (through June 2025)
Jenny Knowles, Standing Committee
The Rev. Fred Moser, President of Standing Committee
The Rev. Scott Neal, Bishop's Appointment
Dr. Lisa Schnell, Chairperson of Committee on Ministry
Collins Sennett, Commission on Finance (alternate through June; member starting July)
The Rev. Amy Spagna, Committee on Ministry
C.J. Spirito, Advisory Commission on Diocesan Organizations
The Rev. Titus Presler, Bishop's Appointment

ex officio:
The Rev. Canon Susan Ohlidal, Canon to the Ordinary for Missional Vitality

Executive Council met 10 times, September 2024—June 2025.

Actions of Council in addition to acceptance of Meeting Minutes, July 1, 2024—June 30, 2025:

- Agreed on a set of group norms for use at each meeting;
- Distributed funds from the sale of St. Ann's, Richford, and St. Paul's, Canaan, according to the Diocesan Policy for the Distribution of Proceeds from the Sale of Diocesan-Owned Property and Closed Churches.
- Approved the Mission Strategy Goals.
- Accepted Clergy Compensation 2025.

- Accepted Draft Diocesan Budget 2025.
- Dissolved Gethsemane Church, Proctorsville, a congregation that no longer met the criteria for mission, pursuant to Title III, Canon 15, 2.
- Accepted revisions to Clergy Compensation and Insurance 2025.
- Approved financial support for Episcopal presence in NEK with Constellation for 3-5 years.
- Approved retroactive compensation for Rt. Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown, recommended by Standing Committee.
- Approved the 2025 housing allowances for Rt. Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown, Rev. Cn. Susan Ohlidal, Rev. Cn. Linda Grenz, and Rev. Lisa Ransom.
- Adopted TEC Model Policies "Policy for the protection of vulnerable adults" and "Policy for the protection of children and youth."
- Adopted diocesan "Policy for Celebrating and Blessing a Marriage (2025)."
- Formed the Sanctuary Diocese Task Force, charging it to explore declaring what it means to be a sanctuary diocese, propose interim steps, and report back at Convention and to the Council liaison, Ms. Jenny Knowles.
- Approved the 2025 housing allowance for the Rev. Ann E. Hockridge.
- Declared the work of the Task Force on Distressed Congregations to be completed.

Council met one additional time in June 2025 to engage with the THRIVE Assessment Process.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Canon Susan Ohlidal
Canon to the Ordinary for Missional Vitality

Global Mission Advocate

No report submitted.

Liturgical Commission

No report submitted.

Mission Farm

Dear Beloved in Christ,

This year, as we navigate the many conflicts and challenges in our world, we are grateful to be grounded in the love of Christ, embraced by the land, and supported by one another.

In late 2024 and into 2025, the Advisory Council at Mission Farm began work on a strategic plan. This initiative involved a comprehensive review of our long history, recognized the remarkable opportunities that have emerged over the past six years, and initiated a vision for a sustainable and resilient future.

We had the privilege of working with our consultant, Peter Fairweather, who guided our larger community in developing a strategic narrative. This narrative helped us articulate and focus on our deepest calling as a community and will guide our actions for the future.

Emerging from this plan and thanks to a generous grant from Trinity New York, we are currently undertaking a feasibility study to build a resilient and sustainable future at Mission Farm. This ongoing work is spearheaded by a committee comprising Mission Farm Advisory Council members and Diocesan Trustees.

The Kitchen at Mission Farm and the Garden

Last year, we received a New Episcopal Community Grant, which helped us launch the Kitchen at Mission Farm—a commercial kitchen and incubator space for food artisans. The fully renovated kitchen now hosts a thriving community of entrepreneurs, including The Stone Kitchen, Lincoln Farm, Panou (delicious Haitian peanut butter!), the Mad Pantry (amazing pastries and breads), Okeemo Ice Cream, Nourished Soul Catering, and many others.

The Kitchen serves as a community hub, providing a space for shared meals using produce, eggs, and honey from the Mission Farm Gardens. The kitchen provides catering for groups meeting at Mission Farm. It also offers support and educational opportunities. This year, we held cooking and canning classes for our community, from which we donated over 100 lbs of canned tomatoes to the food shelf.

The Odeon

In the fall of 2024, we completed the Odeon amphitheater with the addition of the Sike, an acoustic stage area created by artist Dan Snow. This project was funded by a grant from the Vermont Arts Council, and in June, it received an International Sacred Landscape Award from the American Institute of Architects. The Odeon has served as a venue for concerts, Sunday gatherings, weddings, funerals, and as a space for contemplation for the community.

Forest and Conservation

We continue our efforts in conservation by partnering with state and local conservation organizations. Regular hikes with foresters, botanists, wetland specialists, and bird watchers help inform our strategic planning and deepen our understanding of our role within the Mission Farm community. This year, we welcomed visits from two young bull moose, our resident bears, and a variety of other wildlife. With the support of generous donations, the Advisory Council and Forest Committee designed and installed educational narrative signs throughout both the campus and the trails at Mission Farm.

Outreach

Mission Farm and the Church of Our Saviour are dedicated to engaging with local justice issues. We are grateful for our ongoing relationship with Dismas House in Rutland, where we participate in monthly meals prepared by volunteers using organic produce from our Mission Farm gardens. Additionally, every year we organize a coat drive to provide warm winter wear for veterans in Rutland.

This year, Mission Farm partnered with local musicians to host monthly concerts benefiting various organizations in our community. Through these concerts, we raised over $7,000 for veterans, victims of domestic abuse, Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports and other local causes.

Special Programs

Ongoing spiritual gatherings, book groups, and writing groups meet regularly in the Guesthouse at Mission Farm. In addition, this year we held workshops on the topics of grief, aging, and dying, as well as Lenten study groups and a gathering to experience Stations of the Cross through the forest on Good Friday.

Church of Our Saviour

The community at Church of Our Saviour continues to thrive through the service and dedication of members from across Vermont and beyond. Our attendance on Sunday mornings has increased from 9 to 26!

The Guesthouse

The Heminway Guesthouse at Mission Farm hosted the following special events:

- The Vermont Community Foundation
- The Vestry of St. Thomas in Hanover
- Education for Ministry (EFM)
- The Vermont Upper Valley Constellation Vestry Retreat
- The Killington Pico Area Association
- Province 1 Creation Care Gathering
- Writing Groups
- Family Retreats

Highlights from 2025:

804 people engaged in Mission Farm events in 2025
42 community and outreach events were hosted
Average Sunday service attendance: 26 (a 300% increase from 2023!)

2025 Grant Awards
Vermont Arts Council
Lawrence and Mary Rockefeller Fund
AIA International Sacred Places Sacred Landscape Award
Trinity Church Real Estate Development Grant Award
The Vermont Community Foundation - Nonprofit Capacity Building
The Episcopal Church New Community Grant
The Vermont Women's Fund
Healthy Living Fund

Respectfully submitted,

Executive Director and Members of the Advisory Council
The Kitchen and Church of Our Saviour
The Rev. Lisa Ransom, Executive Director
Laura Kent, President of Advisory Council
Kim French, Treasurer
Nancy Daigle, Clerk
Ken Peters
Hannah Davidson
Holly Pierce

Rock Point Commons

Partnerships

This year, we continued to build and expand our community partnerships.

Eagle Bay Academy (Burlington School District).
A major milestone this year was celebrating the first full year of Eagle Bay Academy at Rock Point. In late 2023, negotiated the terms for a long-term partnership with the Burlington School District to make the Rock Point Conference Center the home of Eagle Bay Academy, the district's alternative high school program serving students whose needs aren't met in traditional settings.

Under a 30–45-year lease structure, BSD invested approximately $4.5 million in upgrades to the Conference Center, road, and parking lot, along with stormwater improvements. The lease includes thoughtful provisions to protect the ecological health of the land and preserve Rock Point's sense of quiet sanctuary. Year one (Fall 2024–Spring 2025) was a great success; we launched year two in August, and the partnership continues to thrive.

YMCA of Greater Burlington.
The YMCA continues to base its most popular summer adventure day camp at Rock Point—centered in the cabins, at Eagle Bay, and in the meadows. The Y has been a strong partner in modeling land stewardship. This year, campers also spent time in our new teaching apiary to learn about honeybees.

Crow's Path.
Our long-standing partner Crow's Path—a local nonprofit that connects people to the natural world—continues to run programs for elementary and middle-school students on the property.

Spoonful Herbals.
Spoonful Herbals maintains its teaching garden at Rock Point, leading classes and apprenticeships in traditional medicine and wild botanicals.

Burlington Wildways.
We continue to benefit from our collaboration with Burlington Wildways, a coalition of Burlington land stewards who coordinate connected trails, signage, and volunteer stewardship across the city's wild lands. Through Wildways, we receive support for our Trail Steward program and have gained access to grants for trail stewardship and invasive species management.

Rock Point School.
We continue to partner closely with Rock Point School, engaging students in Community Homestead and land-stewardship work.

Programs

This year, we continued to build and expand our program offerings:

Reading Rock Point.
Our natural history series offers immersive field days in geology, plant and tree identification, forest ecology, and wildlife tracking—helping participants understand Rock Point's landscape and its place in Vermont's natural history.
Learn more: https://www.rockpointvt.org/post/reading-rock-point

Community Homestead.
Volunteers work side-by-side to restore orchards, graze sheep, tend community gardens, and practice maple sugaring—seasonal activities that connect us to the land's rhythms and promote sustainable care. Inspired by gift-economy principles, harvests are shared with volunteers and local mutual-aid groups. Learn more at https://www.rockpointvt.org/post/a-year-at-rock-point-community-homestead

Community Maple.
Each spring, Burlington's only community sugar house comes to life as students, volunteers, and visitors tap trees, collect sap, and boil syrup. We share the maple harvest with the volunteers who help produce it and with organizations that feed our neighbors.
Learn more: https://www.rockpointvt.org/post/community-maple-sugaring

Beekeeping.
Led by Vermont Beekeepers Association educator Deborah Rubin, our beekeeping program engages youth and adults in hive ecology and the essential role of pollinators in healthy ecosystems and food systems. Our apiary is a living classroom where future land stewards and educators take their first steps.

Full Moon Gatherings.
Monthly gatherings that connect participants with the moon cycles and the more-than-human world through poetry, natural history, animism, journaling, and song.

Needs & Offerings Circles.
Monthly evenings dedicated to fostering connection and mutual support. We begin around the fire with song and reflection, then share a meal and focused conversation aimed at building a more permanently organized community—linking organizing, spirituality, joy, and practical support.

Rock Point Center for Nature & Spirituality

This year, we advanced work to open the Kerr Building as a trailside visitor center—an inviting hub for school groups, hikers, and other visitors. The center will help people connect to Rock Point's natural and human history through exhibits and interpretive media, audio tours, and trailcam footage. The chapel within the center will offer a peaceful space for rest, reflection, meditation, or prayer—deepening visitors' connection to the land's quiet beauty and sacred spirit.

Fundraising Campaign

To bring this vision to life, we launched a $100,000 campaign in spring 2025. Funds will help us to create a welcoming visitor experience (reception and gathering spaces), equip the center with tools for exploration and interpretation (exhibits, A/V, guides, field optics), enhance wildlife and pollinator stewardship on the grounds, improve wayfinding from the parking area to the trails, support modest facility renewal, and provide staffing capacity—especially on weekends—to greet and orient visitors.

Progress so far: We have raised **$27,000** to date. With this support, we've already completed the kitchenette renovation, created illustrative panels and Thrust Fault murals, and purchased beekeeping suits for our education programs.

We're excited to keep building on this momentum. If you would like to support the next phase of the Rock Point Center, gifts can be made by check (payable to **Rock Point Commons**, 20 Rock Point Road, Burlington, VT 05408) or online at https://www.rockpointvt.org/giving

Grants

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) – $40,000 (2025).
Awarded by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (with federal funding via FHWA), this grant will expand boardwalk through a perpetually muddy section of the Lone Rock Trail, update trailhead kiosks and wayfinding signage, and support volunteer trail workdays. Trail work is scheduled for completion in November 2025.

One Hive Foundation – Application submitted.
We have applied to a new Vermont-based foundation focused on pollinator health and native plant education. If successful, this grant will launch a native pollinator and plant education and outreach program led from our apiary and grounds. We expect to learn the outcome in December.

Staffing Transition

After many years as a warm and welcoming presence at Rock Point, Chuck Courcy will be stepping back from his role this fall. Beloved by many, Chuck first came to Rock Point as a dorm parent for Rock Point School in the mid-1990s, later becoming caretaker for the property under the Diocese in 2000. When Rock Point Commons was established in 2017, he became our Property Manager. For 30 years, Chuck's hospitality, kindness, and vision have helped shape the community spirit that defines Rock Point. His departure marks the close of a remarkable chapter in our story, and we are deeply grateful for his decades of leadership and care.

Planning a Visit

We warmly invite members of the diocesan community to come and experience Rock Point! Whether for a walk on the trails, quiet time by the lake, or a visit to the new Center for Nature & Spirituality, there are many ways to enjoy this special place.

For those who'd like to stay overnight, our cabins are available for rent in the spring and fall through the Vermont Huts Association — learn more here.

You can also explore upcoming events and workshops on our online calendar.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Kimball
Executive Director, Rock Point Commons

Rock Point Commons Board

No report submitted.

Racial Justice and Healing Committee

The Racial Justice and Healing Committee provides opportunities for people within the Diocese to learn about and grapple with aspects of our cultural racial oppression, white privilege, and what we can do about it.

The main foci of our efforts have included supporting and promoting Sacred Grounds Circles, reaching out to parishes to understand what learning is happening within each parish, participating in our own personal learning, and being available for future workshops and education.

Sacred Ground Circles are powerful 11-week-long experiences of 2-hour Zoom gatherings originally led by white people for white people to do our learning, reflection, and growing. The program has since developed to welcome everyone. Meg Fitch and Denise Noble have been leaders, working with others in our own diocese and dioceses in other states to keep the continuation energetic and effective. We encourage everyone in the Diocese of Vermont to participate in a Sacred Ground Circle. It is a profoundly worthwhile commitment of time and energy. A parish can facilitate its own circle either in-person or on Zoom. Or individuals can join the circles run by the three northern dioceses of Province One. These circles have included participants from all over the country.

We have been working on contacting people in as many parishes as possible. Some of our information is outdated, so this effort has been slow. We feel that it is very important people know what others are doing in different parishes. Learning about the initiatives of other people can catalyze our work, connect us, and make us grow as a diocese.

To learn and train ourselves, the members of the Racial Justice and Healing Committee have been participating in Sacred Ground Circles and also participated in training given by Racial Equity Institute (REI), which built on our previous year's training through the Absalom Jones Episcopal Center for Racial Healing.

We had two specifically diocesan offerings this year. We honored Juneteenth with a Zoomed showing of *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North*, a film by Katrina Browne, the person who spearheaded the design of Sacred Ground. It followed her family's wrestling with their family history as the biggest slave traders in the North and what that led to. The showing was followed by a discussion. We are honoring Indigenous Peoples' Day with the same format of film and discussion, using the film *Native Voices Speaking to the Church and the World*. For both those programs, we are greatly indebted to Sophie Kitch-Peck for their smooth handling of the tech aspect.

If you have any questions about any of these initiatives and/or would like to participate in these offerings, please contact C.J. Spirito.

cspirito@rockpoint.org	(802) 863-1104 x126	(802) 578-9846
Rock Point School	1 Rock Point Rd.	Burlington, VT 05408

Standing Committee

This report covers the period January through September 2025. The 2025 Standing Committee members are: The Rev. Fred Moser (President and Executive Council Member), The Rev. Lee Crawford (Secretary), The Rev. Paul Olson (Quit Claims), The Rev. Rachel Field, Jenny Knowles (Executive Council Representative), Nanci Gordon, Cathie Merrihew, Judith Rogers. The Standing Committee normally meets monthly on the first Tuesday of the month.

To date in 2025, the Standing Committee took the following actions:

- Approved a revised housing allowance for a priest serving in a Diocesan-funded capacity
- Gave consent to the juncture of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Bethlehem into the Diocese of Susquehanna
- Gave consent to the election of the Rev. Robert Price as Bishop Coadjutor of Dallas
- Gave consent to the election of the Rev. Angel Rivera as Bishop of Cuba
- Gave consent to the admission of Heather Caulfield Mills as a Postulant of the Diocese of Vermont
- Gave consent to the admission of Henry Kellogg as a Postulant of the Diocese of Vermont

The following Quit Claims were processed:

- Consent granted for a property in Richmond, Chittenden County, VT on August 7, 2025
- Consent granted for a property in Jericho, Chittenden County, VT on August 18, 2025
- Consent granted for property at 7 Hodgson Drive, Swanton, VT on September 11, 2025

In other matters, the Standing Committee:

- Heard from The Rev. Greta Getlin of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul about possible future work at the Cathedral that may require Standing Committee approval
- Received updates on repairs and renovations at the Bishop's residence
- Received a summary of the Bishop's sabbatical plans
- Received monthly updates on the Diocesan Sanctuary Task Force and a proposed Sanctuary resolution to come before the 2025 Convention
- Discussed concerns about the Safe Church Training requirement that credit reports be run for parish finance officers
- Prepared its response to trial canons instituted out of the Thrive recommendations of 2022, the Standing Committee's response in essence clarifying its roles as prescribed by Episcopal Church canons as distinct from roles of the Diocese's Executive Council

Communications with the Standing Committee may be addressed to:
presidentsc@diovermont.org

Respectfully Submitted,
The Rev. Fred Moser, President

Trustees of the Diocese

The Board of The Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont, Inc. operates according to Canon 11 of the Constitutions and Canons of the Diocese of Vermont. The Trustees meet quarterly with additional special meetings called when certain actions must be acted upon between regularly scheduled meetings. In the 2024-2025 period covered by this report meetings were held on December 9, 2024 (Annual and Regular Meetings of the Trustees); March 10 (Regular Meeting of the Trustees); May 12, 2025 (Special meeting of the Trustees); June 9 (Regular Meeting of the Trustees); and September 8, 2025 (Regular meeting of the Trustees.).

Report of the Real Estate Committee: According to Canon 10.1(b), title to real property of the Diocese shall be held by the Trustees, except otherwise directed by the Bishop and Standing Committee. The Real Estate Committee oversees all matters related to such property that are to come before the Trustees.

- Quitclaim deeds, releasing Glebe land rights were approved for a total of 4 properties in the Trustee year, 2024/2025, collecting $3,250 in release fees.
- Various matters relating to the following properties were also addressed by the Committee during the year:
    - Activities regarding the oversight of property at Gethsemane Church, Proctorsville, VT due to severe flooding included two legal filings that would allow Trustees to convey the property free and clear of an encumbrance which would revert property to the heirs of the bequestor if the property was no longer serving as a place of worship.
        - On February 24, 2025, the probate court denied the initial (first) petition request. This judgment was not appealed.
        - On July 17, 2025, a *Cy Pres* petition was filed in Superior Court and a decision to deny the petition was made on September 12, 2025. This decision has been appealed with a decision on the appeal expected before calendar year-end.
    - In March 2025, Trustees authorized the establishment of a lease between Rock Point School and Trustees. No such lease existed prior to this time; however, terms of said lease substantially reflect the existing school buildings and land as well as ongoing activities that are well-established between the School and the Diocese.
    - Trustees celebrated the opening and completion of Eagle Bay Academy along with the Rock Point Commons board at its September meeting, onsite at Rock Point.

Report of the Investment Committee: According to Canon 10.2(b), all funds other than operating funds unless otherwise directed shall be invested in the Diocesan Unit Trust Fund (DUT). The Investment Committee of the Trustees oversees the management of the Unit Fund, which includes accounts of the Diocese and many of its congregations. The Committee meets with its professional investment management advisors from Hickok & Boardman Capital Management, Advisors in Financial Planning every quarter. Fund performance continues to follow the revised socially responsive (ESG) Investment Policy which was adopted in the spring of 2016.

- As of June 30, 2025, the DUT was valued at $41,567,465 representing, a 10.66% gain in value over the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2024.
- In 2024-2025, the Trustees approved quarterly distributions from the DUT to investors at the most recent rate of 1.729% based on the annual rate of 5% of the average unit values over the past 12 quarters. Each distribution has increased in value since March 2020. The 12-quarter average provides stability to the distribution amount while individual quarterly returns can vary more greatly. The distribution payment dates are the 20th day of the last month in each calendar quarter of the year.
- Other activities of the Investment Committee included various communications with stakeholders of the DUT and revising procedures for the oversight and administrative practices of stakeholder fund management and distribution.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sarah Cowan

Sarah Cowan, President of The Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont, Inc

Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont 2024-2025 Roster:

Noma Anderson; David Bullock; Christopher Chapman; Sydney (Becky) Collette, Sarah Cowan (President and Chair, Real Estate Committee); Rev. David Frederickson; Ann Guillot (Chair, Investment Committee); Lindsey Huddle; Dana Peterson (Secretary/Clerk); Ex officio: Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown

Rock Point School

Overview:
Rock Point School is a boarding and day high school, located on the Rock Point property in Burlington. We serve 9th through 12th-grade students, and occasionally post-grad students who could benefit from an additional supportive school year before college or another next step in their lives.

Students we serve are bright, creative, curious, and unafraid to be true to themselves. Often, their challenges have been due to their living within a system, school, or family that does not understand or accept them. Our students' unwillingness to pretend to be someone else often causes them conflict and stress. We greatly admire the tenacity of our students, as well as their willingness to persevere despite setbacks. We have many artistic students, as evidenced by the paintings, stained glass, and sketches that spill out of the art room and onto the walls of our building. They are sensitive and passionate, and they do not accept easy answers. They are also courageous and willing to accept support to move their lives forward in healthy directions.

Many of our students have not succeeded in a larger, more traditional school setting due to academic challenges. These include slower processing, ADHD, executive functioning struggles, high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder or Non-verbal Learning Disorders, math and/or language-based disorders, large discrepancies between high and low scores in their cognitive testing, and more. Many of our students with academic challenges have never found success in the classroom and instead have built habits around avoiding schoolwork or assuming they can't do it. They have not regularly practiced strategies for breaking down their work into more manageable pieces, have never learned how to study, and have rarely been comfortable asking for help from teachers. Often, previous teachers have misunderstood these students because the students are bright and seem very capable, and the way that their learning challenges manifest can look like opposition or refusal.

Families choose Rock Point School because our focus is to help students who have struggled grow into their best selves. We believe young people want to do well, want to engage in the world, and respond well to positive feedback and encouragement. We also believe students must be challenged to build new habits, stretch their abilities, and broaden their comfort zones. This combination of caring support and firm boundaries often results in a trajectory of growth for our students. This blend of structure and nurturing care is at the heart of all of our programming: from the classroom to the sports program to lunch table conversations to weekend activities.

Last year, we had our 97th graduation ceremony in June, launching 11 seniors into the world beyond RPS. Our graduation is framed by the Head of School and another person - most commonly the Bishop, a Trustee, or a staff member. This year, I offered opening remarks, opened the floor for students, parents, family, friends, and trustees to speak openly, then introduced Hillary Kramer, our Director of Admissions of 22 years, to speak and award diplomas. It was a touching and authentic sharing, a truly wonderful celebration of these young people who made so much growth and change in their time here. Many of them arrived timid, lacking in confidence, with low hopes of the future. They left with their heads held high, believing in themselves, ready to take on new challenges. Ten of the eleven graduates had been

accepted by a college or university to pursue their interests. One of the eleven was excited to explore the trades. We are happy for all of them as they move forward on their journeys.

This year:
We opened this year with 20 students enrolled, 14 boarding and 6 day students. One has since had to leave to pursue more intensive support being unable to engage in our program. This year students are coming from a variety of places they call home, ranging from as close as South Burlington, to around Vermont and the continental U.S., and as far away as Bermuda. We enrolled more local boarders than we have in the past. This sunny warm September weather has helped us start off well! We focus on building meaningful relationships with which we address our students' challenges, such as low self-esteem, depression, suicidal ideation, social anxiety, generalized anxiety, and academic differences (both working on the learning issue, as well as understanding how to approach and own one's learning styles), to name some. Spirits are upbeat, and students are making progress already!

Our numbers are lower than we had hoped again this year. Schools are experiencing enrollment struggles across the nation. We continue to be in full swing marketing the school and have interested students who may join us later, which will give more girth to the student body and boost our budget. We need higher enrollment and tuition to run successfully and keep providing this life-changing opportunity for youth and their families. Our fundraising is improving, and we are using it to increase scholarships and do needed capital projects to take care of the buildings we use. Last year we succeeded garnering a 1.1 M dollar gift allowing us to realize phase one of insulating the basement and work towards installing heat pumps in the dorm floors and apartments. This work was accomplished this past summer. We are presently stewarding more donors to raise the close to 2 M more dollars needed for phase two of the heat pump installation. We continue to be proud of the care and upgrades we provide for the buildings and property that the Diocese generously allows us to use to run our school.

In February 2025 our students partook in the 3rd annual Racial Healing Pilgrimage to Alabama. This year's trip to Montgomery and Selma will follow a curriculum developed by our history teacher, Mark Spigos, to support and enhance this experience for not only the travelers, but the whole school. It is an amazing and powerful experience that we hope every student from RPS will be able to have before they graduate. Bishop MacVean-Brown inspired the initial pilgrimage, which we did in collaboration with the Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge. Students have continued to access funds from the Bishop Tom and Ann Ely Scholarship Fund to be able to attend. We are eternally grateful for this support from all four leaders as we continue our journey forward learning about our history and current times in light of biases and racism. These experiences, in conjunction with ongoing work at the School, have led to meaningful challenges and growth.

We hope to have at least one event this year specifically intended for Diocese members--possibly a holiday treat and song gathering. We welcome folks from around the Diocese to visit for this event or any another time – stories are being created and told every day inside and outside of our walls.

I would love to see you here whenever you might like to visit. Be well and stay in touch!

Thoughts/questions? Please contact C.J. Spirito: 802-863-1104, x126; cspirito@rockpoint.org

Our mission: Rock Point School provides a close-knit, supportive educational community, where high school and postgraduate students who have experienced challenges can become successful academically, build self-confidence, and develop skills for their future. Rock Point School offers academic, cultural, recreational, and spiritual opportunities that support intellectual growth and help students become their best selves.

Respectfully Submitted
C.J. Spirito, Head of School

Province 1 Conference

No report submitted.

General Convention Deputation

Report of the Vermont Deputation to the 2024 General Convention of The Episcopal Church

The Brave Little State had an outsized presence at the 81st General Convention held in Louisville, KY from June 23 to June 28, 2024.[1] The deputation sat center in the front row, as Tom Little serves in the role of Deputy Parliamentarian and helps keep the flow of business running in an orderly and efficient manner. Yet, it is not for this alone that Vermont stood tall among the many deputations. Our deputies distinguished themselves in their deft handling of crafting, shepherding to the floor, and arguing for resolutions on the Israel-Palestine conflict and same sex marriage; speaking on the floor in support or refutation of resolutions; and our deputies stood for election, with one being elected to the Executive Council. To say the least, Vermont distinguished itself and did the Episcopalians of Vermont proud.

Over the six days (plus a day of orientation and final legislative committee meetings) the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops handled 391 resolutions and their various amendments. Most importantly, however, the 81st Convention's highlight was the election of the Right Reverend Bishop Sean Rowe (Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania) to succeed the Most Reverend Michael Curry as the Presiding Bishop. Bishop Rowe was elected on *the first ballot*. When he made his first visit to the House of Deputies his presence was greeted with thunderous applause. He offered an articulate vision for the church saying, "It is time to reorient our church…to support dioceses and churches on the ground, where ministry happens." (Much of his vision echoes our Diocese's THRIVE subcommittee's report on Missional Vitality.) He will begin his nine-year term as Presiding Bishop in November of 2024.

The House of Deputies also participated in a rare event when they re-elected Julia Ayala Harris as president of the House of Deputies. This was only the second time in the modern history of the House of Deputies where an incumbent president faced challengers. Ayala Harris won decisively on the first ballot. The Rev. Steve Pankey (Kentucky) was elected as vice president.

Both houses approved a 143 million dollar budget with a mandated 3.6 million dollar reduction to be implemented over the next three years. Debate over the budget was civil and without much dispute as treasurer Kurt Barnes deftly presented and answered questions regarding the budget. There was concern that creation care ministries were in need of more money, but in budget reconciliation meetings the churchwide Executive Council is expected to allocate more funding for this ministry.

[1] The General Convention is the governing body of The Episcopal Church. Every three years it meets as a bicameral legislature that includes the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops, composed of deputies and bishops from each diocese.

In two of the most anticipated arenas of resolution debate, Vermont played pivotal roles in the resolutions concerning Israel and Palestine, and in making the Book of Common Prayer more adaptive and nimble to church needs.

Regarding the latter, the Venerable Stan Baker chaired Legislative Committee #10: Prayer Book, Liturgy, and Music. His committee's work created a new constitutional definition for the Book of Common Prayer, "Those liturgical forms and other texts authorized by the General Convention per this article and the Canons of the Church." In furthering this work, in a moment of profundity, the Convention authorized, no longer on a trial basis, services for same sex couples; and in our catechism we now recognize marriage as being between "two people." Deacon Baker has spent a good deal of his life fighting for marriage equality and for him to see this work in our church come into reality (because of his tireless efforts) proved to be an emotionally powerful moment for him and all of the Vermont deputation.

The debate over resolutions regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict was tense, yet respectful. Resolutions regarding this matter came from legislative committee #6: Social Justice and International Policy, on which Vermont deputy, Anne Brown, served. Debate revealed significant differences between the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops regarding the language of one key resolution. Tom Little served on the House of Deputies conference committee that worked with its House of Bishops counterpart. With some good drafting, and thoughtful listening on both sides, a compromise resolution was adopted by both Houses. Deputy Luke Krueger took to the convention floor and spoke in favor of the compromise resolution; his remarks were quoted in an article in *The Living Church.* On many levels, the work of Vermont's deputation helped our church speak out and state its position on this deepening tragedy.

It is worth taking a pause here to recognize the work of our deputies in all their committee work. The Rev. Lee Crawford chaired legislative committee #4: World Mission. The Rev. Lisa Ransom served on legislative committee #15: Care of Creation and Environmental Stewardship, where she chaired the subcommittee for Nature-based Resolutions. Tom Little as noted served as the Deputy Parliamentarian, Vice Chair of the House of Deputies Rules of Order Committee, member of the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons, and he was appointed to the Board of Directors for the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice. Anne Brown served on legislative committee #6: Social Justice and International Policy. The Venerable Stan Baker, as noted above chaired legislative committee 10: Prayer Book, Liturgy, and Music.

Two of our deputies stood for election to office. The Venerable Stan Baker ran and was elected to the Executive Council, a very prestigious honor. The Executive Council administers the program and policies adopted by the General Convention, i.e., they ensure that what we voted on is implemented. Luke Krueger ran for a lay position on the Disciplinary Board for Bishops; he did not win, but for a first-time deputy he had a respectable showing.

We were also witness to three major changes in the makeup of our church. The dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan merged to create the Diocese of the Great Lakes. The dioceses of Fond du Lac, Milwaukee, and Eau Claire merged to create the Diocese of Wisconsin. In a profound moment of reconciliation, the Convention elevated the canonical and missional status of Navajo Episcopalians from area mission to missionary diocese. In doing so we heard the stories of our Navajo brothers and sisters of how they maintained their faith amidst their struggle to retain their culture and heritage. They shared with us songs and prayers rooted in their language. They now will be able to elect their own bishop.

Vermont's deputation had two first-time deputies (the Very Reverend Greta Geitlein and Luke Krueger) and one deputy serving at her second convention (Jenny Bower Knowles). Luke Krueger, as noted above, took to the floor multiple times to speak on various resolutions. Each of these new(er) deputies did marvelous work of networking and building relationships with other deputies and alternates, and they will soon learn what committees they will serve on during the inter-convention period.

The alternates distinguished themselves as well. They jumped at opportunities to serve in volunteer roles that contributed to the smooth functioning of the Convention. Each alternate, the Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge, the Rev. Earl Kooperkamp, the Rev. Jennie Anderson, and Lisa Leopold also spent time on the floor as voting deputies when a deputy had a conflict in schedule and could not attend a session.

Without a doubt, Vermont played and continues to play an important and influential role at the General Convention. As the church evolves under the leadership of our new Presiding Bishop, our diocese will remain front and center in leading the way for the church in the 21st century.

Respectfully Submitted by the Deputation from Vermont for the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church,
Thomas A. Little, Deputation Chair

Task Force on Becoming a Sanctuary Diocese

At the 2024 Diocesan Convention, the Rev. Canon Lee Alison Crawford and the Rev. Earl Kooperkamp sponsored a resolution, "Becoming a Sanctuary Diocese," that asked the Bishop of Vermont and the Executive Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont to create and empower a Task Force on Becoming a Sanctuary Diocese of up to ten members (clergy and lay) with a one-year charge to:

- explore declaring ourselves to be a sanctuary diocese;
- propose some interim steps for the diocese and congregations;
- and report to the 2025 Convention with proposals on how we might become sanctuaries for the strangers in our midst to whom we show hospitality, "for by doing that, some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2).

The task force would base its efforts on the work of Episcopal Migration Ministries and that of other Episcopal dioceses that have declared themselves to be sanctuary dioceses such as New York, Chicago, Washington, San Diego and Los Angeles.

The resolution encouraged congregations and institutions of the Diocese of Vermont to serve as places of welcome and healing, provide other forms of material and pastoral support for all persons, regardless of immigration status, and work alongside our neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.

This resolution passed, and in January of 2025, the Executive Council of the diocese created the Sanctuary Task Force. While the resolution called for 10 members to form the task force, a regular group of 15 dedicated members from around the diocese—representing 8 of the 14 counties in Vermont—have participated in monthly Zoom meetings. The task force has also been blessed to receive wise counsel from diocesan chancellor, Thomas Little, and from Vermont Interfaith Action and Grace Initiative Global, based in Manchester, Vermont. Unfortunately, early on in the work of the task force, Episcopal Migration Ministries had to close most of its operations, due to devastating budget cuts resulting from DOGE (Department of Governmental Efficiency).

The task force immediately got to work to: 1) determine the distinction between public areas and restricted areas within our places of worship, this in light of the January 20, 2025, governmental opening of formerly protected areas, including churches, to Immigration and Custom Enforcement agents; 2) look at what other dioceses have done; and 3) create as-needed subgroups. The January and March meetings focused on creating a document with guidelines that could go out to congregations. The task force members also gave updates on the rapid and ever-changing situation on the ground, as it pertained to the immigrant community in Vermont counties.

Meanwhile, the chair of the task force met with Executive Council at its March 2025 meeting to brief council members on its work and allow Council to revise the guidelines that congregations would receive.

The task force sent out the approved guidelines to congregational leaders in April 2025. (It plans to issue another set of updated guidelines later this fall.) The March guidelines were based on similar ones from the Burlington School District, the National Immigration Center, Episcopal

Migration Ministries and other organizations that focus on immigrants. They were vetted by Chancellor Tom Little and the Rev. Dr. Walter Brownridge.

The task force sent out a request for additional members in Chittenden County in April 2025 and several individuals joined.

In July via Zoom, task force members met with long-term General Convention Deputy Sarah Lawton from the Diocese of California, a sanctuary diocese since 2017. The time was well spent, and she encouraged the members to focus on formation, prayer and advocacy to build an unbreakable solidarity.

July and August saw the task force drafting the resolution that will come before convention this year. The resolution sets out clearly that the Diocese of Vermont will be a sanctuary and refuge for the vulnerable. In its deliberations, the task force realized that, in Vermont, there are many vulnerable populations in addition to that of the immigrant. The proposed resolution draws attention to all vulnerable populations (people of the Global Majority [non-white populations], the LGBTQI community, the neurodivergent community, those without homes, those suffering from abuse). The resolution also states our intention to provide safety, not only for the populations at risk, but also for those who help and serve them, and it states that all will be non-violent actors. Finally, the resolution asks Executive Council to authorize a task force that will be dedicated to the work of formation, advocacy, education and support of sanctuary until the 195th Convention in 2027, with the possibility of continuation, as needed.

Throughout all of its work, the task force has served as a clearing house for updates on activity of Immigration and Customs Enforcement in our communities, learning about work that our interfaith colleagues are doing, planning for future steps, such as creating a rapid response team for anyone who is abruptly detained without cause (i.e., without *habeas corpus*) or who has a hearing for obtaining legal residence, and researching further educational resources it can provide.

The task force asks for prayers—not only for its continued work, but for all the vulnerable populations who need sanctuary. And its chair gives thanks for the incredible wisdom and dedication of those who have served on the task force in the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon Lee Alison Crawford, Ph.D.
Chair of the Task Force on Becoming a Sanctuary Diocese

Zero Emissions Task Force

History of the Task Force

In 2020, the Diocese of Vermont took action to combat climate change. At the 188th Annual Convention, delegates approved Resolution 5, Transition to Renewable Energy:

> "RESOLVED, That the [188th] Convention of the Diocese of Vermont ask diocesan leadership to appoint a task force to offer to the 188th Convention in 2021 a plan to end the use of fossil fuels in each of the parishes and properties of the Episcopal Church in Vermont and to transition to 100% renewable energy by 2030."

A task force formed and began meeting in early 2021, but due to the complications of the Covid-19 pandemic the task force was not able to continue its work or report to the 189th Convention or any convention thereafter.

In 2024, deputies to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed Resolution A098 Non-Proliferation of Fossil Fuels, which calls for the elimination of fossil fuels from all Episcopal institutions and dioceses by 2034, and Resolution A021, which promised the formation of a Care of Creation Loan Program to aid this transition.

Emergence of the Zero Emissions Task Force Fall 2024–Winter 2025

In 2024, Phil MacVean reinvigorated the work called for in the Diocese of Vermont's 2020 resolution by asking all congregations to complete and submit Parish Heating Surveys. MacVean initiated this undertaking after meeting with Mark Gibson, of the Anglican diocese of Montreal, and learning about Gibson's work in creating the nonprofit Zero Emission Churches, which provides hands-on help for houses of worship in Canada seeking to change from fossil fuel heating and cooling systems to renewable, zero emissions systems. In October, 2024 a group interested in how to address climate change in the Diocese met informally for a lunch gathering at the 2024 Convention in Burlington. These actions led to the creation of the Zero Emissions Task Force, co-chaired by Phil MacVean and Gaen Murphree, which held its first meeting in February 2025.

The Diocese of Vermont supported and aided the ZETF in numerous ways, including placing Margaret Schotto, Manager for Diocesan Operations, on the task force; providing communications support from Director of Communications Sophie Kitch-Peck; and approving a grant to support the upcoming November 15 hands-on workshop, Powered by Love.

Task Force Activities February 2025 to the Present

Since forming as the Zero Emissions Task Force in early 2025, the ZETF has focused on

- Building committee membership
- Soliciting and collecting Parish Heating Surveys, which provide critical baseline data

- Doing outreach and education with individual congregations about how they can reduce and eliminate fossil fuels from their buildings, including in-person visits
- Planning Powered by Love, a hands-on workshop for church leaders throughout the diocese, to be held November 15 at Mission Farm, Killington
- Researching funding sources
- Liaising with other faith-based climate leaders — including the Green Caucus of the Episcopal Church, leaders of similar task forces in other dioceses, Zero Emission Churches in Canada, Vermont Interfaith Power & Light — and attending Blessed Tomorrow's National Faith Climate Forum and various webinars to better further the work and learn best practices
- Communicating with the Episcopal Church Office of Creation Care about processes and resources
- Continuing to meet, learn, and discuss how we can better assist our congregations in this challenging task

Current members of the Zero Emissions Task Force are Cam Featherstonhaugh and Gaen Murphree, co-chairs, St. Mary's, Northfield, and St. Stephen's, Middlebury, respectively; Susan Ficklin, St. James, Essex Junction; Rev. Rachel Field, St. Mary's, Northfield; Frank Guillot, St. Paul's Cathedral, Burlington; Joann Erenhouse, St. Luke's, Chester; Phil MacVean, who attends congregations throughout the diocese; Margaret Schotto, Holy Trinity, Swanton.

The ZETF is actively seeking new members as we build our capability; to learn more, email Gaen Murphree at gaenmurphree@gmail.com.

Looking Ahead

The ZETF has submitted to this convention a resolution that asks that it be recognized as an official task force of the Diocese of Vermont and that the Diocese, its congregations and institutions, commit to the goals of General Convention Resolution A098 Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation, adopted at the 81st General Convention, Louisville, 2024.

Between now and the Diocese of Vermont's 194th Convention in 2026, the Zero Emissions Task Force plans to continue the work it has begun, including to:

- Work with Diocesan parishes and institutions to develop plans for eliminating fossil fuels, as called for by General Convention Resolution 2024-A098
- Develop a template that will help simplify each congregation's creation of the plan required by 2024-A098 and in setting goals and taking concrete steps
- Identify technical support and recommendations for implementation
- Investigate the creation of a diocesan loan and grant program
- Research additional funding sources
- Hold at least one annual workshop for vestries, facilities committees, Creation Care committees, and all interested parties providing concrete steps to phase out fossil fuels
- Develop and provide other kinds of outreach and education
- Communicate with the Episcopal Church, its Office of Creation Care, and climate leaders in other faith communities to understand best practice

- Continue to find doable ways to help our parishes make this transition, in a spirit of faith, engagement, and commitment that recognizes the pragmatic and financial challenges alongside the urgency of the climate crisis and our responsibility to care for Creation as members of the Jesus Movement.

Respectfully submitted,

Gaen Murphree
Co-Chair, Zero Emissions Task Force